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Voters Endorse New Keepers of the Bay

Duxbury Bay Management Commission approved

By SUSANNA SHEEHAN

There will be a new watchdog group overseeing activities on the water, as town meeting last week approved forming a new Duxbury Bay Management Commission.

Last Tuesday, town meeting voters passed Articles 23 and 24. Article 23 proposed adding a new by-law to create the bay commission and listed its mission. Article 24 inserted the name of the commission into three areas of Duxbury's by-laws in order that it is included in site plan approval.

The new board is the idea of the Duxbury Bay Management Committee, a group of citizens that has been meeting for two-and-a-half years to study all aspects of the bay.

The new commission will consist of nine members with different interests in the bay, such as boating, clamming, commercial and recreational fishing, aquaculture, the ecological health of the bay and other waterfront uses.

According to bay study committee chairman, John

Carnuccio of Winsor Street, the new commission will be the "keepers of the bay."

"Duxbury Bay is unique and remains a healthy and vibrant ecosystem due to a dedicated and diligent harbor-master's department," said Carnuccio.

There are many active committees that have had a role in managing aspects of the bay, such as the shellfish committee, the waterfront committee and the beach committee. However, said Carnuccio, managing the bay in this way is a "fragmented approach."

"There is clearly a new need for an integrated approach," he said.

As stated in the by-law in Article 23 in the town meeting warrant, the mission for the Duxbury Bay Management Commission is "to implement and maintain a management plan that will enhance and preserve the ecological health, pristine waters and the natural beauty of Duxbury bay for future generations while sustaining harmony among all its uses."

The study committee, which researched many different aspects of the bay and

even hired a technical consultant to understand the scientific data generated on the bay, has produced a 200-page draft management plan. This plan will be the starting point for the new commission.

The commission will be responsible for evaluating and

"business days" instead of just "five days" to request the bay management commission provide written comments and recommendation.

An amendment by Ray Bergeron of Soule Avenue to add language that would make the new bay commission

tasks would be part of the commission's scope of work.

After Article 23 passed on a voice vote, voters next approved Article 24 with a two-third majority, which added the name of the commission into three areas of Duxbury's by-laws. This change allows the new commission to be included in site plan and special permit reviews similar to the conservation commission, board of health and other town committees seeking feedback on how a waterfront project will impact the town. Like those boards, the proposed bay commission would get a set of plans and accompanying information on all projects up for review by the town's land boards.

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—John Carnuccio, Duxbury Bay Management Committee

reviewing any proposed changes in bay use, recommending changes to regulations and policies, and providing a forum for dispute resolution for conflicts regarding the bay. The new commission's role would be strictly advisory, not regulatory.

The board will make recommendations and comments to selectmen, town meeting and other committees on things such as policy and regulation changes.

Before they passed Article 23 creating the bay commission, voters supported an amendment by Zoning Board of Appeals Chairman James Lampert that would give the conservation commission five

responsible for "a program for preserving and maintaining existing beaches, swimming areas and town landings" failed to gain support. Study committee members said they wanted to keep the new by-law general but that these

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